slon of the forts was obviously of great military importance; the pecuniary aspect of the question might, therefore, well be postponed to the political. It is also quite possible that the fact that the claim of these States to recognition as independent nations had been so recently put forth made them particularly jealous of their honor and dignity. But, apart from this, it may well have seemed to their people intolerable that the other States should continue to hold forts and arsenals in the territory of States which had withdrawn from political asso-ciation with them. The reasons sometimes alleged by the Federal authorities, such as that the object of the Government in continuing to hold the forts was the protection of the seceding States from foreign invasion,[1] were not, it must be confessed, very convincing. The people of the seceding States believed that the attitude of the United States Gov-ernment was hostile to their independence, and in this belief they were unquestionably right. In fact, they must have gone farther than this. They must have considered that this hostility waR a sufficient ground for declaring war; there is no other explana-tion of their conduct in seizing upon fortB and dock-yards over which the national flag was floating.

For, however much allowance may be made for the excitement which prevailed at the time, such acts are unquestionably acts of war; it is foolish and futile to deny or to endeavor to attenuate their character as such. But in truth, the important question before the authorities of the seceding" States at this

[1] Secretary Holt to Mr. Hayne ; [i] W. R., 168.